



A brief insight into the cult practices of a family of Deir el-meaina: the Qaha example

Elena Panaite

► To cite this version:

Elena Panaite. A brief insight into the cult practices of a family of Deir el-meaina: the Qaha example. Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections, 2023, 39, pp.231-242. hal-04535482

HAL Id: hal-04535482

<https://hal.science/hal-04535482>

Submitted on 6 Apr 2024

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.



A BRIEF INSIGHT INTO THE CULT PRACTICES OF A FAMILY OF DEIR EL-MEDINA: THE QAHA EXAMPLE

Elena Panaite

Institut français d'archéologie orientale / Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology

ABSTRACT

The article presents some preliminary remarks on the foreman of the left side Qaha (i) and his religious practices through a look at a number of his stelae. The divinities to which these stelae are dedicated are part of the divine world of Deir el-Medina, including the main ones of the Egyptian pantheon, as well as the Near Eastern gods and goddesses much worshipped during the reign of Ramesses II. The study focuses in its second part on the Qaha's so-called "Southern stela," found broken into numerous small fragments in 1930 and kept since then in Deir el-Medina storerooms. The stela was part of an original structure built in the court of the family's funerary complex. Its study aims to make known this original monument which brings additional information on one important family of the village at the time of Ramesses II.

KEYWORDS

Deir el-Medina, Qaha, stela

INTRODUCTION

The site of Deir el-Medina, located on the Theban west bank, provides unique evidence regarding the ancient Egyptian daily life in the New Kingdom. Its inhabitants, called the "servants in the Place of Truth" (*sdm-ꜥꜥ m s.t-Mꜣꜥ.t*), were the workers, artisans, and craftsmen who built and decorated the royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings and the Valley of the Queens in the late Bronze Age (15th–11th centuries BCE). They have left behind a necropolis, a village, and a multitude of objects of funerary and daily life. To this must be added all the temples they erected, chapels, and votive monuments that bear witness to a varied religious life. The latter attracted the attention of researchers very early on.¹ The Deir el-Medina pantheon includes both indigenous and foreign divinities, some of which have been

already the subject of more specific research.² Prosopographical studies also provide important additional information into the beliefs and practices of these New Kingdom families.³

This study would like to present some preliminary thoughts and outlines regarding the religious life of the foreman of the left side called Qaha (i).⁴ The worker Qaha (i) was born in a well-known family from the village of Deir el-Medina at the beginning of the Nineteenth Dynasty at the latest. He replaced Pashed (x) in the important position of foreman probably in the early years of Ramesses II⁵ and subsequently passed it on to his second son, Inherkhaui (i), thus initiating a family dynasty of chief workmen that was maintained until the reign of Ramesses XI. Qaha (i) was already known by several artifacts when his tomb, TT 360, was

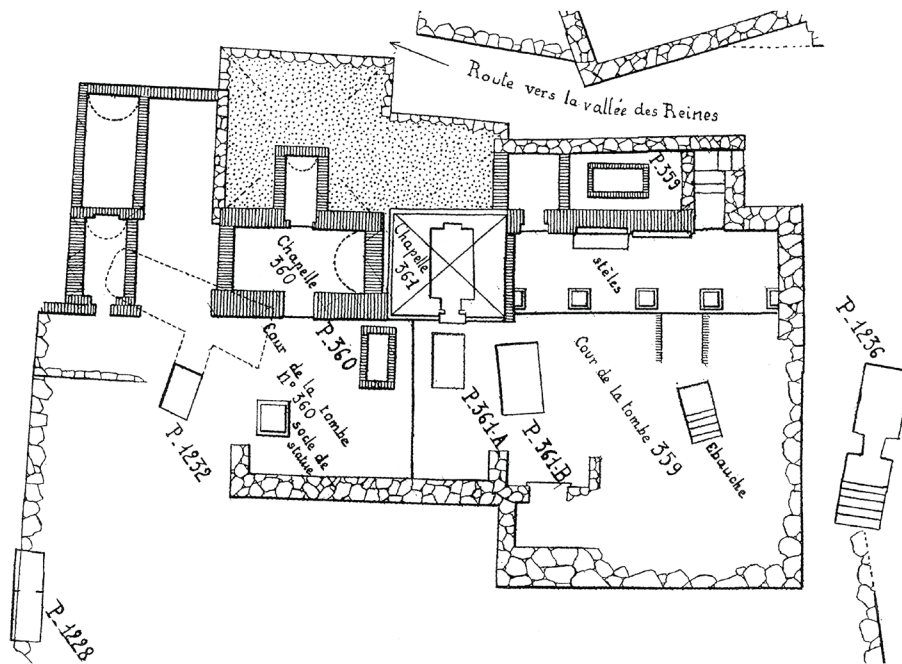


FIGURE 1: Plan of Qaha's funerary complex, showing the courtyard connecting the three tombs TT 359, 360, and 361. After Bruyère 1933, pl. 1. (© Ifao).

found by B. Bruyère and his team in 1930.⁶ He left behind about forty objects including stelae, statues, ushebtis, as well as one pyramidion coming from the pyramid of his chapel. The stelae, several of which mention the members of his family, were dedicated to different deities and testify to the religious practices of his time. The most significant are briefly presented in the first section of this article. The second part is focused on an unpublished stela and its original structure, as part of an ongoing research on Oaha's monuments.

QAHA'S FUNERARY COMPLEX AND WORSHIP PRACTICES

The tomb of Qaha (i), TT 360, located at the southern end of the western necropolis, is part of a funerary complex of three tombs, including TT 359 and TT 361 (FIG. 1).⁷ All belong to the same family: TT 361 is the oldest and belongs to Qaha's father, the chief craftsman Huy (ii), while TT 359 was made for his great-grandson Inherkhaui (ii), called "the Younger."⁸ On the outside, the tombs are joined by a courtyard bordered on the north by a portico with three pillars. Under the ground, TT 359 leads through a small corridor into the first room of the tomb of Qaha (i). From there, going in a northwest direction, come two vaulted rooms, the last of which

was the burial chamber of Qaha (i). Only the latter was decorated with classic funerary scenes, but a fire severely damaged its walls.⁹

Qaha's funerary chapel was leaning against the rock. Already badly destroyed at the time of its discovery, the chapel presents the conventional Ramesside pyramid-like plan and was oriented north-south. It had a room and a naos which partly preserves the original decoration. On the northern wall of the naos, a throne is depicted on which is sitting a goddess dressed in a red garment, that Bruyère thought belonged to the goddess Maat.¹⁰ Also, the west wall of the naos was showing traces of an embedded stela into the wall. In addition, stelae mentioning Qaha (i), his wife Tuy (i), and other members of his family were probably decorating the walls of the courtyard and the entrances to the funerary chapels. Several fragments and objects have been found in and around the funerary complex during Bruyère's excavations in 1930.¹¹ They include various limestone fragments of stelae and murals, door jambs, offering tables, lintels, but also ceramics, pottery vessels, and wooden furniture. Two stelae bases were also found inside the tomb.¹² Few loose blocks indicate that at least one big stela placed in the courtyard of TT 360 was

showing the king Ramesses II accompanied by his vizier Paser making offerings to the seated god Amun.¹³ Some of these objects are now displayed in several museums, while others are kept in the Deir el-Medina storerooms.

It is considered that Qaha (i)'s tomb, or at least the place where it was located, south of the necropolis, was an important point on the journey of the processions through the necropolis of the oracular statue of the deified king Amenhotep I.¹⁴ This king of the Eighteenth Dynasty was the first to establish his tomb in the Theban mountains and was therefore considered the founder of the royal necropolis and of the village. His cult, visible on many stelae but also inside the tombs, was among the most important among the workmen. One of his missions was to solve the disputes between them, particularly those involving real estate, as shown by the ostrakon O. BM EA 5625 in the British Museum.¹⁵ The latter reports that in the fourth year of the reign of Ramesses V¹⁶ two workmen had to appeal to the deified king Amenhotep I for a legal decision regarding a house. The text states that the oracle was delivered in the doorway of the funerary chapel of the foreman Qaha (*m r(z) n t3 (m) h' t n '3 n js.t Q3h3*). The title *'3 n js.t* indicates that it is the owner of TT 360 who is mentioned here. The position of the tomb at the southern end of the necropolis, on both paths to the Valley of the Queens and to the Valley of the Kings, would justify this choice. Among all the stelae dedicated to Amenhotep I, two of them belong to a worker named Qaha.





It is possible therefore that at least one of the two limestone stelae showing Qaha standing alone while making an offering to the deified king belong to him. The round-topped stela from the British Museum (BM EA 274) was made by the servant in the Place of Truth (*sdm-'š m s.t-M3't*), Qaha.¹⁷ If it is indeed the owner of tomb TT 360, he erected this stela before becoming foreman of the left side. The worker wears a long sash kilt with straight hem and has long hair. He offers two burning braziers to the king Amenhotep I. The other stela, kept in the Petrie Museum (UC 14423), is preserved with a part of the wall where it was embedded.¹⁸ The workman Qaha also wears a long sash kilt with one band across the chest but he has his hair shaved and raises both hands in an adoration pose. No title is preserved. The owners of the two stelae are thus portrayed differently. The first one may belong to the foreman Qaha (i), as he is always depicted with

this hairstyle, while the second could have been made by a later Qaha (v), a chief sculptor, son of Qenymin (i) and father of the sculptor Iyernutef (v), who lived at least during Ramesses IV's reign.¹⁹ The workman's figure corresponds precisely to those known of him on his other stelae.²⁰ However, these two possible datings require further research. Their small dimensions, less than 30 cm in height, indicate a position within niches in a wall. They could have been installed in the surrounding wall of Qaha (i)'s funerary complex, perhaps at the resting place where the oracle of the deified king Amenhotep I was consulted. We do not know if this place already had such religious functions during Qaha (i)'s lifetime, but it is noteworthy that during the reign of Ramesses II the use of oracles significantly increased. The king developed the cult of Amenhotep I as well as the festival processions with the oracular statues carried out.²¹

It seems thus normal that Qaha (i) wanted to mark his close relation with the deified king. Another limestone stela from the British Museum (BM EA 291) shows in its upper register the foreman in the Place of Truth (*'3 n js.t m s.t-M3't*) Qaha (i) worshipping the figure of Amun-Re in the form of a ram, an animal considered as a privileged intermediary to approach the god.²² He has one arm raised and the other holds an incense-burner over an altar heaped with offerings. In the lower register, his father Huy (ii) and his son Merwaset (i) worship Hathor, Amenhotep I, and his mother, Ahmose-Nefertari. This stela, which depicts together the father and his son, could have been placed somewhere in their funerary complex.





However, it is still a difficult task to replace the votive monuments in their original location, even if the discovery place could have been near their original deposit places. Architectural elements can sometimes give some clues. For instance, according to Bruyère, under the windows of the eastern face of the funerary chapel, there was enough space for façade stelae, and two of them could have been fitted there: one found close to tomb TT 359 dedicated by Qaha (i) to the afterlife gods Osiris and Anubis (BM EA 144) and another one, kept in Munich, dedicated to Ptah, Meretseger, and Hathor (ÄS 0042 [27]).²³ The second stela has since turned out to belong to the sculptor Qaha (v), encountered previously.

The stela BM EA 144 shows in the upper register the dedicant Qaha (i) before the funerary gods Osiris and Anubis.²⁴ They guarantee the

successful realization of the funerary service and the transformation of the deceased into an Osiris, and are often represented on private stelae or on the walls of the burial chamber. This stela was most probably located inside the funerary complex. It is remarkable for the large number of the Qaha (i) family's members (17) figured here bringing offerings on two bottom registers and provides a significant source of information for his genealogy. His parents, children, and some of his siblings are figured there. It was indeed the role of the whole family to ensure the cult of the deceased through continuous ritual offerings, so that he could be transformed into a *netjer* and thus join the divine sphere. The stela also testifies to Qaha (i)'s family ties with individuals with possible foreign origins. Qaha's sister Takhat (ii) married a worker named Karo (i) (or Kel, *K3r*  ), the owner of TT 330. Only his name, written here with the throw stick (Gardiner Sign List T14) specific to foreign people, suggests a Libyan origin.²⁵ Karo's parents have both Egyptian names, Simut (i) and Pashedet (ii), and he probably started his career as a craftsman in Thebes before being transferred to Deir el-Medina in the early Ramesside period.²⁶ Qaha's brother, Hay (ii), married a woman called Ta-tjemhet (ii) (*T3-tjmh.t*  ), literally *the Libyan* (from the Tjemehu-Libyans), her name being also written with the throw stick. One of Qaha (i)'s daughters also bears this name, probably to pay tribute to her aunt.

If there are any distant ties with people of Libyan origin, they are solely reflected in anthroponymy, as there is currently no known representation of any Libyan god in Deir el-Medina.²⁷ While some of them have held important positions,²⁸ one is inclined to believe that all that they have kept from their cultural heritage is only the name. Conversely, a significant number of Near Eastern deities have been integrated into the Deir el-Medina pantheon. Qaha (i) has dedicated a stela to three of them (BM EA 191).²⁹

The votive stela depicts the foreman Qaha (i), his wife Tuy (i), and their son Anuy (i) worshipping the god Reshep and the goddess Qadesh, the most popular Near Eastern deities in Deir el-Medina during the Ramesside era.³⁰ The limestone stela has a rounded top and two registers. In the upper half it shows the triad of Min, Reshep, and Qadesh. In the middle stands the goddess Qadesh, figured nude, as usual, shown *en face* on a lion striding towards the right.³¹ She holds in her hands a bunch

of lotus flowers and two serpents. She is flanked by the gods Min on her right and Reshep on her left, both standing on a pedestal-shaped shrine. This disposition and iconography are characteristic of the triad,³² although a few details stand out. Usually, the epithets given to the foreign gods are exactly the same as those of the Egyptian deities and their iconography is to some extent "Egyptianized" by borrowing mythological features and attributes from local deities. Reshep and Qadesh are here bearing Egyptian epithets: lady of the sky for Qadesh (*nb.t p.t*) and the great god, lord of the sky, ruler of the divine Ennead for Reshep (*ntr 3 nb p.t hq3 psd.t*). But the spelling of the name of the goddess Qadesh, *Kš.t*   is different from its common form, *Qdš(t)*.³³ Leibovitch has read *Knt* and explained that this name derived from the Asiatic city of Kent (*Knt*), known in the geographical lists of the New Kingdom.³⁴ He pursued this argument based on the Amarna letters where the town of Kdšī is sometimes called Kinza.³⁵ However, the letter "n" is written in the lower register of the stela with its normal graphical form  whereas here, one can clearly distinguish a rectangle shaped letter . B. Davies reads Kasht and believes this is an interpretational error by the draftsman.³⁶ Given the high technical quality of the stela, it is however hard to believe that such an error could have occurred. Moreover, the stela has other particularities. The god Reshep does not wear the white crown of Upper Egypt, as he does on all the other stelae coming from Deir el-Medina. Instead, he has long hair with a band across the forehead decorated with a gazelle head in front, his emblematic animal.³⁷ His hair dress, as well as the large beard clearly refer to his Asiatic origins. Furthermore, in the lower register, Qaha (i), followed by Tuy (i) and Anuy (i), are praising the warrior goddess Anat, another Asiatic divinity less common among the Deir el-Medina community. Her iconography on this stela also differs from her more usual one, as a huntress riding a horse with a bow in her hands. Here, instead, Anat has the smiting pose but is figured sitting on a throne, in the same position as the god Reshep, as he is depicted on several stelae from Deir el-Medina.³⁸ One can wonder if the place where the stela was erected is linked with its unusual decoration but its original location is still unknown. It reflects, however, the family's devotion towards three much worshipped Asiatic divinities at the time. Moreover, the anthroponymy also shows a

connection of Qaha's relatives with the Near East, as shown by the stela Bankes no. 2.³⁹

The round-topped stela is divided into two registers. In the upper part, the chief craftsman Huy (ii), Qaha's father, holds an incense burner in front of the sitting gods Amun-Re and Mut, tutelary gods of the Temple of Karnak. Behind them stands a goddess with a lioness head called daughter of Re, the cobra (*s3.t Rꜥ p3 W3dy.t*). The bottom register indicates that Qaha (i) made the stela before being promoted to the rank of foreman. He is represented at the head of a procession with a part of his family following. Just behind him stands his brother Paherypedjet (ii) who puts his hand on a little boy's head called *s3=f Hr(w) ꜥꜥ*, literally *the Syrian*. This child, Kharu (i), was seen as one of Qaha's sons, unless the gesture of Paherypedjet (ii) indicates an affiliation. In this case, Kharu (i) would be Qaha (i)'s nephew and that would explain his absence on other documents that list Qaha (i)'s own children. Paherypedjet (ii)'s wife is unknown so far, and this remains hypothetical for the moment.

Based on anthroponymic studies, the population of Deir el-Medina would have been composed of people from all over Egypt but also from the neighboring countries, Nubia, Libya, and the Near East.⁴⁰ W. Ward explains that in the Late Bronze Age there was in the whole ancient world a mobile middle class who could move freely to wherever they could exercise their skills.⁴¹ Besides the exchanges of material goods and labor that have always occurred between the Nile Valley and the Near East, mutual religious influences intensified at the beginning of the New Kingdom, leading to the introduction of Asiatic divinities into the local pantheon. Therefore, the Near Eastern gods started to be worshipped by the Egyptian rulers in the same way as their own eternal gods. Ramesses II is known to have had a special relation with the goddess Anat, considering himself as her "son" and as "the beloved of Anat" on several monuments coming from the temple he dedicated to her in Tanis.⁴² Therefore, the proximity of the community with the royal court could also explain the abundance of stelae dedicated to the same gods as those adopted by their own sovereigns.

THE SO-CALLED SOUTHERN STELA AND ITS PARTICULAR STRUCTURE

The Southern stela was collected by Cl. Robichon and J. Černý (FIG. 2). Since the discovery in the 1930s, all its recovered fragments have been kept

in the Deir el-Medina storerooms. A part of them was inventoried and photographed by the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology in the 1980s and some were assembled in the 2000s. But the whole structure is still currently broken up into several hundred pieces of different sizes. In the first instance, this study aims to examine all its fragments, in order to attempt to reproduce its decoration. In a second instance, the complete study of the monument and its reinsertion into the historical and religious background of Deir el-Medina will bring additional data on the foreman of the left side and his family. As the research of the stela is still at an early stage, the following description is based on the report and notes provided by B. Bruyère.

The stela was found at the back of the portico inside the court that was built by Qaha (i) to the north of his father's tomb (TT 361) and from which one could later access the entrance to his great-grandson's tomb (TT 359).⁴³ The location of this court, not in front of his own tomb, is thus particular, but its general architecture showing a portico and an entrance pylon fits into the conventional pattern of the Ramesside tomb.⁴⁴ The courtyard was 5 m long east-west and 8.25 m wide, with a portico as wide as the courtyard and 2.65 m deep, supported by three pillars of 0.70 m long on each side and two half-pillars engaged in the side walls. The back wall of the portico was pierced by two doors on the sides. Between these doors, two large elaborately carved limestone stelae, the so-called Southern and Northern stelae, were embedded in the wall.

The Northern stela, still in place, preserves since its discovery only the lower part.⁴⁵ It was made of large limestone slabs that are 10 cm thick and 1.75 m wide. It shows the foreman Qaha (i) followed by his wife Tuy (i), both turned to the left, towards the Southern stela. The text of the stela starts with a prayer addressed to the gods Ptah, Re-Horakhty, and Hathor, before being addressed to the visitors. It guarantees them the succession of their children in their hereditary offices in return for a libation. The upper part of the stela could have represented the worshipped gods and Bruyère thinks it could have also shown Rameses II, as the king is mentioned in Qaha (i)'s title (*ꜥ3 n js.t n Wsr-M3ꜥ.t-Rꜥ-stp-n-Rꜥ m s.t-M3ꜥ.t*).

The Southern stela was placed in a larger structure without any parallel in the necropolis. Cl. Robichon reconstructed in the entire assemblage a drawing, with the help of the numerous fragments and traces

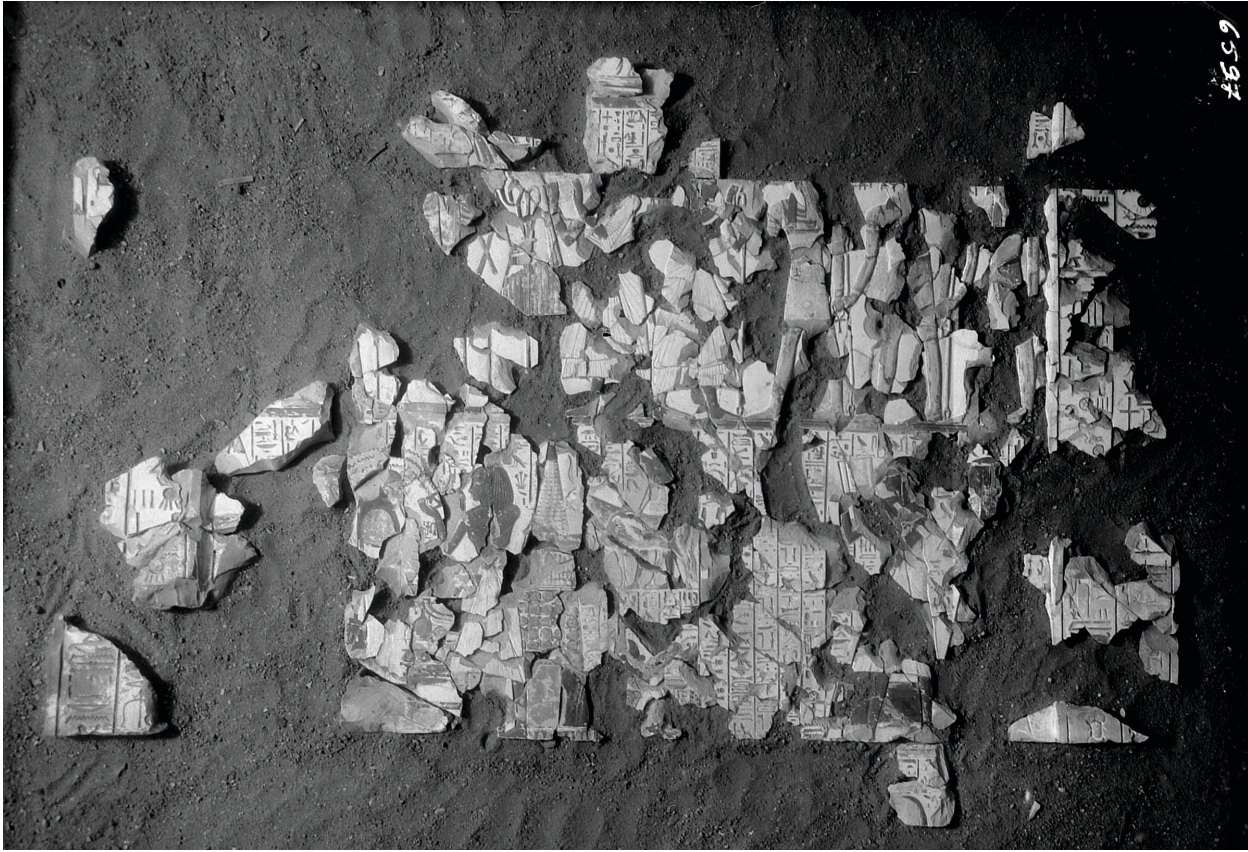


FIGURE 2: Qaha's southern stela at the time of its discovery. (© Ifao, pv_2004_06597).

left in the ground and the wall after the removal of the stela (FIG. 3). Thus, according to their description, the stela itself was placed on a kind of table whose purpose would have been an offering altar or a table for libations. Two rectangular pillars that are 15 cm in width, carved and painted on all four sides, stood at the two outer corners to support this thick table. They represented the deceased Qaha (i) standing or kneeling depending on the orientation of the faces, in a pose similar to those found on the pyramidions. The background could have depicted the deceased and his wife on their knees, facing south, in the same praising attitude. The table was set into the wall at about 80 cm high. Its sides were carved with an Egyptian cornice with a broad flat band under the torus. The whole structure was polychrome with a white background.

The stela itself was placed on this support. It was rectangular, topped with a cornice and framed at both sides with inscribed columns. Its dimensions of 10 cm thick and 1.55 m wide were similar to the



FIGURE 3: Reconstitution of the southern stela by C. Robichon. After Bruyère 1933, pl. 39. (© Ifao).

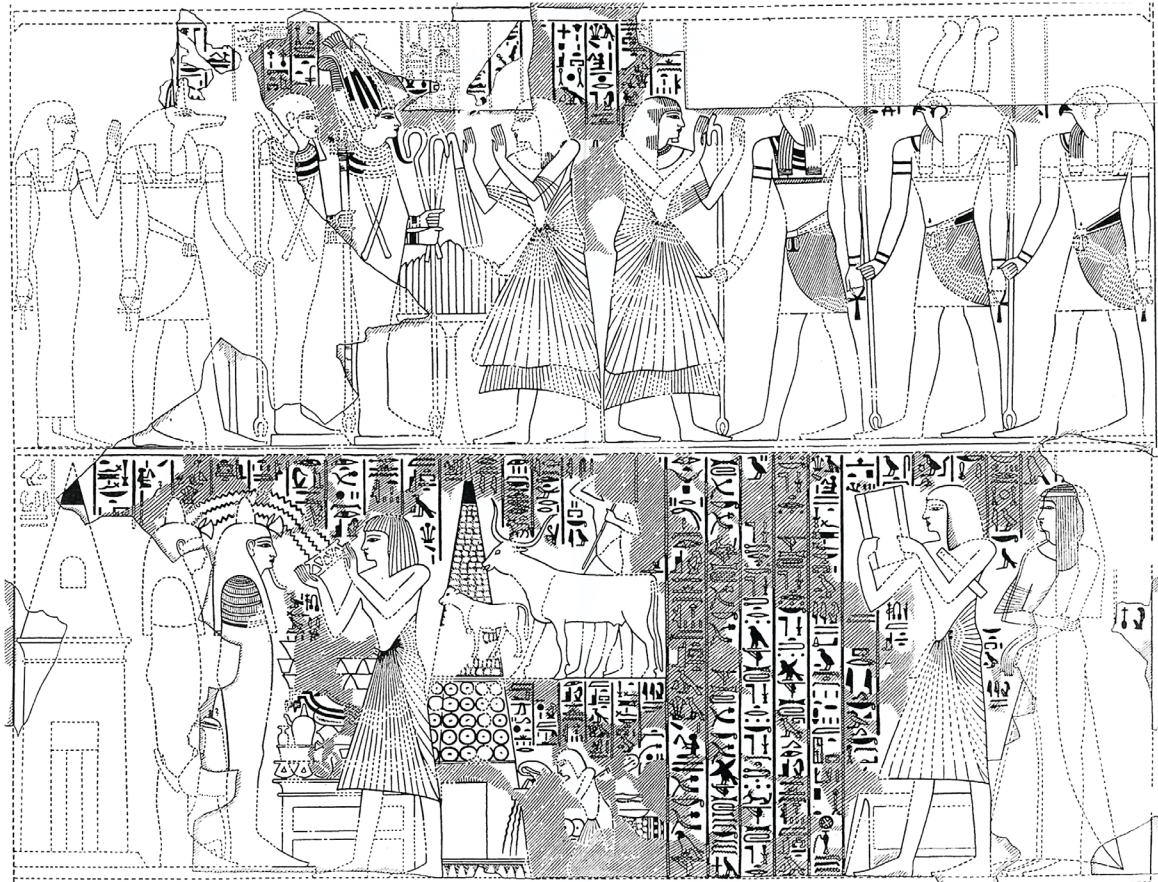


FIGURE 4: Reconstitution of the two more complete registers of the southern stela. After Bruyère 1933, pl. 37. (© Ifao).

northern one. It was organized into three roughly equal registers, the first in raised relief, the other two carved in low relief. Its general appearance and the decoration themes reproduced by Cl. Robichon evoke a type of specific rectangular stela well-documented in Deir el-Medina by several other fragments that praise the solar god and contain a specific scene of the Opening-of-the-Mouth ritual (FIG. 4).⁴⁶ Thus, the whole structure evokes the resurrection of the sun and consequently that of the deceased.

The top register is divided into two symmetrical parts. The dedicant Qaha (i), twice shown standing in the center, faces to the left (South) three funerary gods, Osiris, Ptah, and Anubis.⁴⁷ According to the principle of symmetry, Qaha faces to the right (North) three hieracocephalic gods, most probably three forms of Horus,⁴⁸ holding the *was*-scepter and the *ankh*-cross (FIG. 5).^{49,49} The middle register is the most complete and it shows a scene from the Opening-of-the-Mouth ritual. On the left end, the two statues

belonging to Qaha (i) and to his wife Tuy (i) stand in front of their tomb. Their son, the scribe Anuy (i) makes offerings and libations in front of them. He is in charge of purifying his father (*jr.t 'bw 2 sp n Wsjr '3 n js.t m s.t-M3'.t Q3h3*). Immediately to the left of this scene, the register is then divided into two other smaller levels: on the upper level a shepherd stands behind a cow and a calf. A fragment of this scene has been seen lately restored in the sales catalogue of Charles Ede Antiquities Gallery.⁵⁰ Below, Qaha himself makes offerings. At the left end of the scene, the deceased is again shown standing with his wife, the lady of the house Tuy (*nb.t pr Tw[y]*). The texts written in front them are part of the purification formulas of the Opening-of-the-Mouth ritual. The lower register is almost completely destroyed. Bruyère noted that the few fragments found showed that there was a lector standing before a pile of offerings on the floor. J.-J. Clère restores only two fragments, one of which is bearing the name of the deceased. Some fragments among those preserved

in the storerooms also indicate the presence of a *sem*-priest and of the mourners, as is often the case in the specific iconographical theme of the Opening-of-the-Mouth. Because they were not included in the 1930 facsimile, this reconstruction should be reconsidered for the further study.

This stela is significant for a number of reasons. At a prosopographic level, it brings a new mention of the eldest son of Qaha (i), Anuy (i), deputy of the left side, in charge of his father's funerary cult. Even if he holds a main position on almost all of Qaha (i)'s stelae, he is not the one who succeeded his father at the position of foreman of the left side, which passed to his younger brother Inherkhaui (i). Anuy (i) could have died before, or he might as well have left the village of Deir el-Medina.

On an architectural level, the unusual location of this northern court and the presence of the two stelae question the functioning of the entire funerary complex. Did Qaha (i) build this court there because it was necessary to leave enough space close to his burial chapel for Amenhotep I's oracle and procession? Bruyère assumes that this arrangement could have been made according to the religious principle that always places Horus to the left of his father Osiris when this couple of gods faces the rising sun.⁵¹ The workmen would therefore place the son's tomb chapel to the left of that of the father when these chapels are oriented to the east. Moreover, a statue of Qaha (i) erected in the court of his chapel was standing opposite the doorway of the northern court.⁵² Was his gaze pointing to this northern courtyard as the main place of his funerary cult? Further research is needed to answer all these questions.

Finally, this stela is another piece to be added to the mosaic of cult practices of Deir el-Medina and acts as a communication instrument in a particular cultural system. The two stelae are addressed to the visitors, but one may wonder who really had access to them? Was this particular structure made to persuade the visitor even more strongly to stop by and pour a libation for the tomb owner? The whole family probably gathered in this court periodically and also during the main village festivities, when likely other participants of processions were passing by.

CONCLUSION

It may seem ironic for us to follow someone's life through the memorials he erected for his funerary



FIGURE 5: Fragment with the upper part of a hieracocephalic god (© E. Panaite).

complex. For that, Deir el-Medina is a unique case. The many stelae found here commemorate votive activity and give an insight into the religious expression of the community. As K. Exell noted, the votive stelae "are the material manifestation and record of a select repertoire of social practices, and act as markers of social identity. As inscribed private monuments, conveying information via text, iconography and materiality, the stelae display a multi-layered message about the dedicator, his place in society, and the structure of that society."⁵³

The survey of some of Qaha (i)'s monuments reveals that the foreman was a man of his time. The display of religious practices has a very high social value in the Ramesside period. The high number of small temples, chapels, and stelae dedicated to various deities in Deir el-Medina publicly reflects worker's devotion. Qaha (i) himself, and the many members of his family, piously display their devotion to the great gods of the Egyptian pantheon. Therefore, in order to better understand the individual, his life, and his choices, it is necessary to examine his material objects which all have a story to tell. This will be the purpose of a larger project that will focus on Qaha (i) and his close relatives. The study of all his monuments will make it possible to understand the decorative choices, the religious and

funerary beliefs of this worker and his family at an important moment in Egyptian history, a period of stability and, hence, of cultural renewal throughout the country, which could have been reflected in the cultural practices of Deir el-Medina.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to thank Cédric Larcher, Director of the French Archaeological Mission of Deir el-Medina, for his welcome to the mission, as well as Cédric Gobeil and Kathrin Gabler for their careful reading and valuable comments on an earlier version of this paper. The author bears full responsibility for any remaining errors. Many thanks also go to the organizers of the first edition of the International Egyptological Conference in Romania, which is hopefully the beginning of a series of fruitful meetings in this country, and especially to Renata Tatomir for all the work and efforts she has done to make this event happen.

REFERENCES

- Allam, Schafik. 1973. *Hieratische Ostraka und Papyri aus der Ramessidenzeit*. Urkunden zum Rechtsleben im alten Ägypten 1. Tübingen: Selbstverlag des Herausgebers.
- Blackman, Aylward M. 1926. "Oracles in Ancient Egypt: II." *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 12: 176–185.
- Bierbrier, Morris L. 1982. *Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae, etc., Part 10*. London: British Museum.
- Bonnet, Hans. 1952. *Reallexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Bruyère, Bernard. 1930. *Mert Seger à Deir el Médineh*. Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale 58. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale.
- . 1933. *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1930)*. Fouilles de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale 8.3. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale.
- . 1939. *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh (1934–1935), Troisième partie: le village, le décharges publiques, la station de repos du col de la Vallée des Rois*. Fouilles de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale 16.3. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale.
- Cabrol, Agnès. 2001. *Les voies processionnelles de Thèbes*. Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 97. Leuven: Peeters.
- Černý, Jaroslav. 1927. "Le culte d'Amenophis Ier chez les ouvriers de la nécropole thébaine." *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 27: 159–203.
- . 1958. *Egyptian Stelae in the Bankes Collection*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- . 2001. *A Community of Workmen at Thebes in the Ramesside Period*, 2nd ed. Bibliothèque d'étude 50. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale.
- Cherpion, Nadine and Jean-Pierre Corteggiani. 2010. *La tombe d'Inherkhâouy (TT 359) à Deir el-Medina*, 2 vols. Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale 128. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale.
- Cornelius, Izak. 1994. *The Iconography of the Canaanite Gods Reshef and Ba'al: Late Bronze and Iron Age I Periods (c 1500–1000 BCE)*. Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 140. Fribourg: University Press; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- . 2004. *The Many Faces of the Goddess: The Iconography of the Syro-Palestinian Goddesses Anat, Astarte, Qadesh, and Asherah c. 1500–1000 BCE*. Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 204. Fribourg: Academic Press; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Davies, Benedict G. 1999. *Who's Who at Deir el-Medina: A Prosopographic Study of the Royal Workmen's Community*. Egyptologische Uitgaven 13. Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten.
- . 2013. *Ramesside Inscriptions, Translated and Annotated: Notes and Comments, volume III. Ramesses II, His Contemporaries*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Davies, Norman de Garis. 1934. "A High Place at Thebes." In Anonymous (ed.), *Mélanges Maspero I: Orient ancien* 1, 241–250. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale.
- Demarée, R. J. 2002. *Ramesside Ostraca*. London: The British Museum Press.
- Demarée, R. J., Kathrin Gabler, and Stéphane Polis. 2022. "A Family Affair in the Community of Deir el-Medina: Gossip Girls in Two 19th Dynasty Letters." In Svenja A. Gülden, Tobias Konrad, and Ursula Verhoeven (eds.), *Ägyptologische Binsen'-Weisheiten IV. Hieratisch des Neuen Reiches: Akteure, Formen und Funktionen*, 43–126. Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse 17. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner.

- Donker van Heel, Koenraad. 2016. *Mrs. Naunakhte & Family: The Women of Ramesside Deir el-Medina*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.
- Dorn, Andreas and Stéphane Polis. 2016. "Nouveaux textes littéraires du scribe Amennakhte (et autres ostraca relatifs au scribe de la Tombe)." *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 116 : 57–96.
- Edwards, I. E. S. and T. G. H. James. 1970. *Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae, etc., Part 9*. London: British Museum.
- Erman, Adolf. 1911. "Denksteine aus der thebanischen Gräberstadt." *Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* 1911 (49): 1086–1110.
- Exell, Karen. 2009. *Soldiers, Sailors and Sandalmakers: A Social Reading of Ramesside Period Votive Stelae*. GHP Egyptology 10. London: Golden House.
- Fuscaldo, Perla. 1972. "Las divinidades asiáticas en Egipto: Reshep y Qadesh en Deir el-Medina." *Revista del Instituto de Historia Antigua Oriental* 1: 115–136.
- Gabler, Kathrin. 2017. "Stele Turin CGT 50057 (= Cat. 1514) im ikonografischen und prosopografischen Kontext Deir el-Medines: nb.t-pr Mw.t(-m-wjA) (vi) im Spannungsfeld der Mächte der Taweret und des Seth?" *Rivista del Museo Egizio* 1: 1–39.
- Gunn, Battiscombe. 1916. "The Religion of the Poor in Ancient Egypt." *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 3 (2/3): 81–94.
- Hollender, Gabriele. 2009. *Amenophis I. und Ahmes Nefertari: Untersuchungen zur Entwicklung ihres posthumen Kultes anhand der Privatgräber der thebanischen Nekropole*. Sonderschrift, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Abteilung Kairo 23. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Kampp, Friederike. 1996. *Die thebanische Nekropole: zum Wandel des Grabgedankens von der 18. bis zur 20. Dynastie*. Theben 13. Mainz: Philipp von Zabern.
- Keller, Cathleen. 2008. "Some Thoughts on Religious Change at Deir el-Medina." In Sue H. D'Auria (ed.), *Servant of Mut: Studies in Honor of Richard A. Fazzini*, 149–154. Leiden: Brill.
- Kitchen, K. A. 1980. *Ramesside Inscriptions, Historical and Biographical*, vol. 3. Oxford: B. H. Blackwell.
- . 1983. *Ramesside Inscriptions, Historical and Biographical*, vol. 6. Oxford: B. H. Blackwell.
- . 2000. *Ramesside Inscriptions, Translated & Annotated: Translations*, vol. 3. *Ramesses II, His Contemporaries*. Oxford: B. H. Blackwell.
- . 2012. *Ramesside Inscriptions, Translated & Annotated: Translations*, vol. 6. *Ramesses IV to XI, & Contemporaries*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Lambert, E. J. and H. R. Hall. 1922. *Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae, etc., Part 6*. London: British Museum.
- Leibovitch, Joseph. 1961. "Kent et Qadech." *Syria* 38 (1–2): 23–24.
- Lipiński, Edward. 2009. *Resheph: A Syro-Canaanite Deity*. *Studia Phoenicia* 19; *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 181. Leuven: Peeters.
- Meurer, Georg. 2015. *Penbui—Wächter an der Stätte der Wahrheit: eine prosopographische Untersuchung zu Deir el-Medine in der 19. Dynastie*. GHP Egyptology 24. London: Golden House.
- Noberasco, Giorgio. 1981. "Gli dei à Deir el-Medina (Studi su Deir el Medina - 2)." *Oriens Antiquus* 20: 259–275.
- Panaite, Elena. 2016. *L'image des 'Libyens' dans la culture pharaonique. Du protodynastique au Moyen Empire*. Université Paul Valéry, PhD Thesis.
- Porter, Bertha and Rosalind L. B. Moss. 1960. *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings, I: The Theban Necropolis, Part 1: Private Tombs*, 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- . 1964. *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings I: The Theban Necropolis, Part 2: Royal Tombs and Smaller Cemeteries*, 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Russo, Barbara. 2012. *Kha (TT 8) and His Colleagues: The Gifts in His Funerary Equipment and Related Artefacts from Western Thebes*. GHP Egyptology 18. London: Golden House.
- Schulman, Alan R. 1984. "The Iconographic Theme: 'Opening of the Mouth' on Stelae." *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 21: 169–196.
- Stewart, Harry M. 1976. *Egyptian Stelae, Reliefs and Paintings from the Petrie Collection, Part One: The New Kingdom*. Warminster: Aris & Phillips.
- Sweeney, Deborah. 2014. "Women at Worship on Deir el-Medina Stelae." In Jaana Toivari-Viitala, Turo Vartiainen, and Saara Uvanto (eds.), *Deir el-Medina Studies: Helsinki, June 24–26, 2009, Proceedings*, 179–190. Vantaa: Multiprint.
- . 2016. "Family Gods at Deir el-Medina?" In Renata Landráfová and Jana Mynářová (eds.),

- Rich and Great: Studies in Honour of Anthony J. Spalinger on the Occasion of His 70th Feast of Thot*, 299–312. Prague: Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Arts.
- Tosi, Mario and Alessandro Roccati. 1972. *Stela e altre epigrafi di Deir el Medina: n. 50001 – n. 50262*. Catalogo del Museo Egizio di Torino, serie 2, collezioni 1. Turin: Edizioni d'Arte Fratelli Pozzo.
- Tosi, Mario, Maria Teresa Nicola, and Morris L. Bierbrier. 2003. "Deir el Medina, la carriera del capo operaio Paneb: un riesame." *Ricerche di egittologia e di antichità copte* 5: 91–98.
- van Walsem, René. 1982. "The God Monthu and Deir el-Medina." In R. J. Demarée and Jac. J. Janssen (eds.), *Gleanings from Deir el-Medina*, 193–214. Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten.
- Ward, William A. 1994. "Foreigners Living in the Village." In Leonard H. Lesko (ed.), *Pharaoh's Workers: The Villagers of Deir el Medina*, 61–85, 163–174. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.
- Weiss, Lara. 2015. *Religious Practice at Deir el-Medina*. Egyptologische Uitgaven 29. Leuven: Peeters.
- NOTES**
- ¹ Erman 1911, 1086–1110; Gunn 1916, 81–94; Noberasco 1981, 259–275; In general, all the works that deal with the religion in ancient Egypt mention the findings of Deir el-Medina.
 - ² See Bruyère 1930 for the goddess Meretseger, and Hollender 2009 for the divine couple Amenhotep I and Nefertari. For different aspects of Deir el-Medina religious life, see, e.g., Keller 2008, 149–154; Sweeney 2014; Weiss 2015; Sweeney 2016.
 - ³ Davies 1999; Tosi, Nicola, and Bierbrier 2003; Russo 2012; Meurer 2015; Donker van Heel 2016; Dorn and Polis 2016.
 - ⁴ The name of "Qaha" is rare in the earlier Nineteenth Dynasty. In his study of the residents of Deir el-Medina, B. Davies counts 7 workers named Qaha, the first being the one we are studying, cf. Davies 1999. Out of these, one is perhaps to be eliminated: Qaha (vi) figures as the son of the chief workman Pashed in his tomb (TT 3). However, this Qaha could be the same as the one of the TT 360, represented here as Pashed's adopted son, cf. Černý 2001, 294.
 - ⁵ For recent insights into Qaha (i) and his family, see Gabler 2017; Demarée, Gabler, and Polis 2022.
 - ⁶ B. Bruyère's excavation reports, issued between 1924 and 1952, are still the main source of information for the monuments of Qaha (i). For the discovery of the tomb, see Bruyère 1933, 72–84. His house in the village (NE VIII), one of the largest and most spacious, reflects the power of the family over several generations, cf. Porter and Moss 1964, 702, 704. Bruyère 1939, 251–253.
 - ⁷ Porter and Moss 1960, 416.
 - ⁸ To be distinguished from Inherkhaui (i), his grandfather. To date, of the entire funerary complex, only his tomb has been published and is open to visit, cf. Cherpion and Corteggiani 2010. For the family genealogy see Davies 1999, 12–30.
 - ⁹ Porter and Moss 1960, 425 (10/12, 14/15); Kitchen 1980, 600–601; Kitchen 2000, 412–413; Davies 2013, 436–437; Bruyère 1933, 72–82.
 - ¹⁰ Bruyère 1933, 75.
 - ¹¹ Bruyère 1933, 90–109. Part of them have never been studied nor published since Bruyère's research reports in the 1930s.
 - ¹² Bruyère 1933, 100.
 - ¹³ Bruyère 1933, 91. The fragment pictured in the report shows the lower part of a seated god. In the absence of textual sources, it can be either Amun or Amenhotep I.
 - ¹⁴ Černý 1927, 184–185.
 - ¹⁵ BM EA 5625, verso 7–8. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA5625, accessed 21 October 2021; Demarée 2002, 16, with bibliography.
 - ¹⁶ The ostrakon is dated to the reign of Ramesses IV by Blackman 1926; Černý 1927; Allam 1973.
 - ¹⁷ BM EA 274. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA274, accessed 21 October 2021; Porter and Moss 1964, 722–723; Lambert and Hall 1922, pl. 41.
 - ¹⁸ UC 14423, Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, University College, London. <https://petriecat.museums.ucl.ac.uk/detail.aspx#57713>, accessed 28 October 2021; Stewart 1976, pl. 38, no. 3.
 - ¹⁹ Davies 1999, chart 15.
 - ²⁰ Munich, Staatliches Museum Ägyptischer Kunst ÄS 0042 (27). Porter and Moss 1960, 424 (3); Kitchen 1983, 209–210; Kitchen 2012, 163; Bruyère 1930, 49 fig. 29. The stela dedicated to

- Amun of Karnak found at the “village du col” also belongs to him, cf. Davies 1934, pl. IV, 3; Porter and Moss 1964, 589; Kitchen 1983, 210; Kitchen 2012, 163.
- ²¹ Exell 2009, 74–79.
- ²² BM EA 291. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA291, accessed 21 October 2021; Porter and Moss 1964, 723 (b); Kitchen 1980, 604; Kitchen 2000, 414; Davies 2013, 439; Lambert and Hall 1922, 9, pl. 32; Bierbrier 1982, 27–28, pl. 65; Cabrol 2001, 389.
- ²³ In fact, Bruyère mixed the inventory numbers of the stela and he assigned a stela Munich 42 to Qaha (v), son of Qenymin (i), and a stela Munich 27 to the foreman Qaha (i), cf. Bruyère, 1933, 73, 118.
- ²⁴ BM EA 144. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA144, accessed 21 October 2021; Porter and Moss 1960, 424 (2); Kitchen 1980, 602–603; Kitchen 2000, 413; Davies 2013, 437–438; Edwards and James 1970, pl. 39.
- ²⁵ Davies 1999, 274–275; For the presence of this name in Deir el-Medina, see Ward 1994, 77–78.
- ²⁶ For a recent prosopographical study of Karo see Demarée, Gabler, and Polis 2022, 80–87.
- ²⁷ In a broader perspective, the Egyptian sources do not give any information about the Libyan people’s beliefs but some gods related to the Western Desert can be related to them, cf. Panaite 2016, 292–330.
- ²⁸ Such as chief craftsman, guardian of the tomb, scribe and priest, cf. Ward 1994, 68.
- ²⁹ BM EA 191; Porter and Moss 1964, 723 (c); Kitchen 1980, 603; Kitchen 2000, 413–414; Davies 2013, 439; Edwards and James 1970, pl. 39 (2), 39A (2); Lipiński 2009, 205–206.
- ³⁰ Fuscaldo 1972. Reshep and Ptah were the male divinities particularly honored, as patrons of strength and respectively of craftsmanship.
- ³¹ For the iconography of the goddess Qadesh in Egypt and Near East, see Cornelius 2004, esp. 94–99 for her religious function.
- ³² See the chapter on the Ramesside triad stelae of Reshep, Min and Qadesh in Lipiński 2009, 197–217.
- ³³ E.g., stela of the contemporary scribe Ramose, Turin 1601 [50066], cf. Cornelius 2004, 124; Tosi and Roccati 1972, 102–103, 290.
- ³⁴ See the Karnak Project records KIU 2105, 27; KIU 2106, 9; KIU 3482, 5.
- ³⁵ Leibovitch 1961, 31–34.
- ³⁶ Davies 2013, 439.
- ³⁷ Characteristic that he shares with the Egyptian god Shed, cf. Bonnet 1952, 676–677.
- ³⁸ Cornelius 1994, 59–64; For a general overview of Reshep in Deir el-Medina, see also Lipiński 2009, 181–189.
- ³⁹ Černý 1958.
- ⁴⁰ Ward 1994, 61–85.
- ⁴¹ Ward 1994, 61.
- ⁴² Cornelius 2004, 85.
- ⁴³ Porter and Moss 1960, 424 (A); Bruyère 1933, 88–90, pl. 35–39.
- ⁴⁴ Kampp 1996.
- ⁴⁵ Porter and Moss 1960, 424 (B); Kitchen 1980, 598–599; Kitchen 2000, 411–412; Davies 2013, 435–436; Bruyère 1933, 86–88, pl. 33 (top), 34.
- ⁴⁶ Schulman 1984.
- ⁴⁷ The restitution of J.-J. Clère of a female goddess behind the gods is hypothetical because no fragment has been found.
- ⁴⁸ Bruyère notes that they can be either three forms of Horus (Harmakhis, Harsiesis, Harsaphis) or of Montu. Only disparate fragments have been preserved and the most important part, the accompanying text, is missing. It seems, however, that stelae showing a person in adoration before Montu are very limited in number, even if during the Twentieth Dynasty there has been a significant increase of Montu-names compared to the other New Kingdom periods, cf. van Walsem 1982, 195, 205. Qaha (i)’s great-grandson, Inherkhaui (ii), owns one stela showing him adoring Amun, Montu and the deified king Amenhotep I in a standing pose, cf. Turin 7358 [50032], Cherpion and Corteggiani 2010, 284–287, pl. 154.
- ⁴⁹ Five forms of Horus are attested on Deir el-Medina votive stelae: Re-Horakhty, Harsiesis, Haroeris, Harmakhis, and Horus, the last two being less frequent, cf. Exell 2009, 29.
- ⁵⁰ Sales Catalogue Charles Ede Limited, Egyptian Antiquities, London, 2013 (n° 6). Ex Jacques Schumann Collection acquired from Despras in July 1967.
- ⁵¹ Bruyère 1933, 85.
- ⁵² Porter and Moss 1960, 424 (1); Kitchen 1980, 600; Kitchen 2000, 412; Davies 2013, 436; Bruyère 1933, 73.
- ⁵³ Exell 2009, 1.